

IMAGINE... LIFE IN KOREA IN THE MID-1900s

GRADES: 9-12

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SUBJECT: World History, Social Studies

TIME PERIOD: 2-3 class periods

OBJECTIVES:

1. Define imperialism, occupation, communism, refugee
2. Describe some of the hardships faced by Koreans before and after the Korean war
3. Analyze how American students would react if they lived in Korea during the mid-1900s
4. Discuss the impact of an imperialist government in the country under occupation
5. Evaluate students' own learning and participation in this lesson

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- The following excerpts are from Helie Lee's *Still Life with Rice* (New York:Scribner, 1996). Please note: each student will be assigned one excerpt. For smaller size classes, excerpts may be omitted.
 1. Marriage of Strangers (a traditional Korean wedding) p.49-56
 2. Going to China to be Korean (moving from Korea to avoid Japan's rule) p.106-114
 3. Ten Thousand Years (life in a foreign country and the desire to go home) p.145-160
 4. War! War! War! (being trapped in North Korea under communist rule) p.185-195
 5. The Long Train Ride (reconnecting with family without food or shelter) p.236-242
 6. Shattered Faith (living in a refugee camp) p.248-256
- Copies of prepared handouts

BACKGROUND:

The excerpts covered in this lesson deal with a variety of issues facing Koreans before, during and after the Korean war. Teachers may want to give a brief overview of the political history so that students will have an understanding of the big picture before they start this activity. Imperialism, occupation and refugee should be defined. Students should have a familiarity with the basics of communism so that they will understand what it means to live under a communist government. Ultimately, students will gain insights into the culture and customs of a Korean family in the mid-1900s. Teachers may choose to downsize this activity by using only a few of the readings and implement this cooperative lesson in four-person groups rather than six-person groups.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the years under discussion with background information that is relative to the class curriculum. This information should be limited and should merely give the students a frame of reference, especially if this lesson is to be completed in two to three days. [10-20 minutes, depending on your curriculum]
2. Students will be divided into groups of six. Each person will be assigned an excerpt and topic (so that each person will have a different topic). Each person should circle their topic and study the question they are to answer. [5 minutes]
3. Then each group of six will subdivide into partner groups to engage in the following

introductory activity [10 minutes]:

- a. In each partner group, one student is labeled "A," and one is labeled "B"
- b. Then the "A" person puts his/her topic on his/her desk and silently writes a response to the "A" question posed. "A" then passes the paper to "B," and "B" lists a response underneath what "A" has written.
- c. This activity should continue silently for about three to four minutes.
- d. Then at the end of this "rally," one minute should be used for each person to comment on what his/her partner wrote.
- e. This whole activity is repeated with the "B" person's question.
- f. (OPTIONAL) If you have extra class time left, reassemble the group of six and have each person report back the most interesting response to his/her topic.

4. Students will read their excerpts for homework.
5. After each student has read his/her excerpt, start class with a warm-up activity by having each student quietly write a commentary on his/her reading. Use handout 2 to guide the students in their response. [5-10 minutes]
6. Have students join their partner from the previous day to discuss their reading assignment with each other. "B" will summarize his/her excerpt in as much detail as possible in 3 minutes. When "B" is finished, "A" will summarize the three most important points that "B" said. Then, "A" will share his/her excerpt with "B." After 3 minutes, "B" will summarize the most important points that "A" has made. This procedure ensures that students understand their partners' story. Remind students that they will want to listen carefully because they will report their partners' story to the larger group. [8 minutes]
7. Have students form into their original group of six (thus each person reads a different topic). Start with the person who listened to excerpt 1 and have this person prepare a summary. This student will have three minutes to explain what he/she heard, and then his/her partner will add any additional information for one minute. Thus, each reading should take about 4 minutes. Since each member of the group has something to contribute, this activity will take approximately 24 to 30 minutes. The teacher should call out start and stop times for each segment to avoid exceeding the time limit.
8. Students will respond to the questions on handout 3 for homework.

EVALUATION: (Point values are left to the teacher's discretion.)

- Grades should be based on student's comprehension, participation and cooperation as exhibited through the group activities and completion of handouts.

ENRICHMENT:

- Photocopy additional readings from the book for the students to read and have a class discussion on the excerpt(s).
- Offer extra credit to anyone who wants to read the whole book and write a review.
- Have students research current events articles pertaining to Korea and have a class discussion to review the articles they found.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____

Partner's Name: _____

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HANDOUT 1: TOPIC SHEET & INTRODUCTION QUESTION

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DIRECTIONS:

1. Take notes on the background information given in class. Write down vocabulary definitions in your notebook.
2. After you have been assigned to a group and a partner, circle the excerpt for which you are responsible.
 1. Marriage of Strangers (a traditional Korean wedding) p.49-56
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3. Follow the teacher's directions for the "partner rally" in order to fill out this sheet.
4. Take a minute to think about the questions listed below. You will have three minutes to brainstorm (silently) with your partner on a variety of responses to the questions. Circle your assigned letter and write down your responses to your question.
 - A. List areas in which life would be different if a foreign country conquered and took over the United States? Think about how this would impact all aspects of life.
 - B. Describe how life would be impacted if the United States was divided at the Mississippi river: the western half of the country ruled by a communist government and the eastern half ruled by a democratic one. Consider how people would feel if half their family members lived on the other side of the border.

****REMEMBER:** You cannot pass the paper out of your hands until you have added to it, and likewise your partner cannot pass it back to you unless he/she has added his/her response. If you are stumped, try focusing on the problems that would develop for people in each of these scenarios.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____

HANDOUT 2: RESPONSE TO YOUR EXCERPT READING

DIRECTIONS: [warm-up activity—10 minutes]

In the space below, describe how you would feel if you were placed in a similar situation as the one you read about in your assigned reading. How would you respond if this happened to you? Please be detailed in your response.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____

HANDOUT 3: RESPONSE TO YOUR GROUP'S DISCUSSION AND ALL EXCERPT READINGS

Answer the following questions with details and examples:

1. Which story stood out in your mind the most? Why?

2. What about their experiences would you ask this family if you could meet them?

3. Even though all these situations are different, are there any common elements that helped this family survive?

4. Use the following scale to evaluate both your and your group's performance in this activity.

SELF-EVALUATION ON WORK DONE IN PAIRS

Answer the questions by circling the number that best reflects your opinion.

1. I made certain we both understood the material we were studying.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 Always

2. I listened to the contributions my partner made.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 Always

3. I felt that my partner listened to me.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 Always

4. I highlighted or took notes to help me remember what I read and what my partner said to help me remember his/her story.

I forgot. 1 2 3 4 5 I compiled a detailed list of main points.

5. I reported my partner's story to the larger group without any mistakes.

My partner helped. 1 2 3 4 5 I did a super job on my own.

With other members of your group, answer the questions by circling the number that best reflects your corporate opinion.

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